

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY East Germany

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SUBJECT Design of a Position Finder for Maritime Vessels
by WTBG

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. On 19 May 1954 a conference was held at VEB Wissenschaftlich-

of Devices

Dienst der VF See (Sea Police Maritime Hydrographic Service),
Chief Engineer Dr. Weller (fmu), Chief Designer Thielicke (fmu)
and Engineer Mart (fmu) as representatives of WTBG. The discussions
at the conference were on the clarification of the problem of
whether WTBG could develop an electric rangefinder to meet definite
requirements. The problem was stated as follows: A surveying
vessel executing bottom researches near the coast must determine
her position within a degree of accuracy of 1 to 5 meters. The
optical measuring methods by means of goniometric instruments
entailed too great inaccuracies and, in addition, were largely
dependent on weather conditions. It was now hoped that by
adopting a new principle, namely the use of a radar rangefinder,
the desired maximum accuracy in position determination could
be reached. Three triangulation points, between 20 and 50
kilometers apart, had been geometrically determined with an
accuracy of less than one meter. Reflectors returning the
impulse by the radar equipment of the vessel
are to be used to these triangulation points to allow the
emitting vessel to pick up the reflected impulse. If
the distance between the surveying vessel and the triangulation
marks, accurate to one meter, is determined, a triangle of three
known sides is obtained and the ship's position can be determined
with the utmost accuracy. The specifications required that a
ship's position be accurately determined at a distance ranging from
20 to 50 kilometers from the coast. This high degree of accuracy of the ship's
position was allegedly needed for bottom research. In the
course of the discussion it was also mentioned that in case of
war it would be possible to determine accurately the position of
mine fields the enemy might have laid in front of a harbor or
off the coast.

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2. After a long discussion of the possibilities such equipment might offer, WTEG declared that it was prepared to develop such equipment. It was required that it should be ready for use on shipboard by the spring of 1956. Immediately after the conference, WTEG applied to Zentralamt fuer Forschung und Technik (Research and Technical Center) of the Government Planning Commission for permission to undertake the development. Korvettenkapitän [redacted] decided that he would forthwith inform Viceadmiral Hans-Joachim Verner to expedite the matter, and ask him to give the Zentralamt the reasons for the application.

for permission

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